

The Dream of Noel

by A.Q.P.

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Foreword . . .

THE DREAM OF NOEL is a real contribution to our literature of Christmas. It consorts with an expectant nature; it joins us with the creatures of the deep woods and of the stall,—as “the wonder-light comes on.” We are reminded of the Logos conception as set out in the Fourth Gospel: this is salutary for a generation which had come to be a stranger to any Jesus other than the Jesus of history. Albeit it is not obtrusively philosophical, but one finds himself a boy again in the Ontario snows within “the cincture of the templed wood,” or one listens to the voices of the domestic creatures who hold converse in the strange and awful time. Even the doubting but gentle Hardy hoped the kine might kneel on the Holy Night. Creation finds cosmic focus in Christ while the stars seem coursing through the frame of Mary, what time the ages gather in the room. There is not only a faithful and vivid descriptive power but there is a starry and mystical conception in the verse, reminding one of Francis Thompson,—a conception fortified with the language of a classical scholar who knows words. The songs have a simple nobility which is in keeping with the theme. This poetry should find a response in discerning minds (so often surfeited and cynical and ready to toss all verse aside) and give, especially at Christmas, a high radiance to our days.

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The Dream of Noel

The dream of Noel gleams across the skies,
And fills with wonder raptured human eyes,
The earth is touched with glory not its own,
It burns with fires of the Heavenly zone;
All things shine in their immortality,
Their essence in the world that is to be.

* * * *

VOICE OF SNOWFLAKE

"I hope we won't be late;
The trees have templed all the wood
With pillars tall:
The birds are all elate
To sing their chorals one and all;
We of the crystal brotherhood
Must ride the breeze with speed
To bring our jewelled witchery of snow
To make the alabaster floor
Where wilding feet may stealthy go.
For gathered softly there
Tiny mice will come with meed
Of love, eager to adore,
Timid little feet pressed close in prayer;
Happy-hearted squirrels from hollow bole
Of ancient tree, will leave their castled lair
Laden with offerings of their fruity hoard;
And soft-eyed rabbits in ermine stole
Fearless of fears, feeling the spell

THE DREAM OF NOEL

Will swiftly gather more and more.
Summoned by some faint, sweet bell,
Deer from their coverts shy
With meek moon-eyes in the dim forest ways
Under the still starred night,
Lifting their quiet gaze
Upward intent toward the sky
Will wait in antlered company,
With mute expectancy,
The visionary light.

Never could we white-winged ones afford
Not to be first in the great white lure
That draws and draws and draws into one
still mood
All things within the cincture of the templed
wood.
We must hang with myriad gems each
bough,
With tinkling candelabra crystalline,
That when He comes, the mystic Light-
Divine
Of all soul-sweet eyes the blissful food.
May arc in glory from the Christ-Child's
brow
The forest aisles scintillant with His corona-
tion pure,
The raptured radiance of the Infant Lord."

THE DREAM OF NOEL

SONG

*They all, they all, they all,
All creatures great and small
Join in the Wonder-Story
To hail the Lord of Glory.*

*The Sun of all Creation,
The great Creator's Son,
Drives the night from faces,
Lightens all earth's places.*

*The world has now its end
Which first began in Him,
For whom all voices blend
In one glad triumph Hymn.*

*The circle is complete,
All is a rounded whole,
All things link hands to greet
The Babe, the Joy of No'l.*

* * * *

VOICE FROM THE STALL

*"What is it, brother of the stall,
That makes all things so strange?
Just now the cock has crowed the midnight
hour
As though he sentinelled some power
Which o'er the earth did range*

THE DREAM OF NOEL

With thrilling, hushed footfall,
Making some magic change
As though the in was out, the out was in.

This place seems filled with murmurings,
~~Not the~~ soft breathings of the wind
But beatings of innumerable wings,
Wafting sweet incense of flowers never seen
From fields no foot has been.
One has a feeling as though our dull kind
Had been lifted into realms of the mind
Where we could know the good of men and
 sin,
And like them need the same great pardon-
 ing.
I feel some great thing draweth near;
The night is starred but moonless, yet the
 dawn
Seems bringing to birth some sun;
Not in the East, far above it doth appear:
With trembling fear the wonder-light comes
 on.
Now it breaks in floods through all Heaven's
 doors
With singing as to their widest swinging:
Through every crevice, opening of this place
It streams, pours o'er these humble straw-
 strewn floors.

THE DREAM OF NOEL

But look! as centre-glory is a Face,
Face of the infant, blissful, blessed One.
How strangely sweet and wondrous now we
 feel,
What can we do, we lowly kine, but kneel?"

SONG

*At last the Day has come
 For all was night before,
Of all the days the sum
 Which Love had long in store.*

*All Time has made Him King,
 Author of days and years;
Before and since they bring
 To Him their joys and tears.*

*To Him the ages bow,
 Who brought real Day to earth,
When men could first avow
 The wonder of their birth;*

*That man is born of God
 In very nature one,
In loudest praise may laud
 The Father, as a son.*

THE DREAM OF NOEL

*And so the Babe from Heaven
Brings in the Age of Gold,
The greatest Gift e'er given
In sweetest story told.*

* * * *

CREATION'S PROLOGUE

Fire mist, star mist, nebulae, floating dreams;
At the long way's dream-end lies Bethlehem,
And wonder, power, glory all the way:
As the Lord God dreamed, so He created,
The Universe flamed outward from His mind,
And nestled in its heart lay mystery
The tender inmost of Divinity.
A billion flaming aeons to a Babe,
And history's little faintly-lighted scroll;
Finite infinite, infinite finite,
The Cerulean Mind o'erdomes them all.
A world, a woman with the pains of God
Impossible alike for mind of man;
The world appeared, and lo! the Christ Child
came,
Our God was minded that it should be so.

MARY-MOTHER

"So deep a thrill of wonder now I feel,
The stars on high seem coursing through my
frame

THE DREAM OF NOEL

Singing of unheard raptures whence they
came.

Creation all seems bursting into bloom,
The waiting ages gather in this room:
I feel the tides of everlasting power,
Eternity seems borning in this hour,
All earth and heaven are bending low to
kneel."

ANGELS SINGING

"The Lord of Glory came into a cattle shed,
The light celestial shone upon His infant
head;
His maiden-mother mild with wonderment
was mazed,
To her all things below to highest Heaven
seemed raised;
The palaces of God were in earth's humblest
spot,
The Lordship of the world had throned
man's lowliest lot."

CHILD-SHEKINAH

And now the world has all become a Child
In intimate, soul-innermost with God;
A crystal stairway is the Child's own heart,
Simplicity unlocks Divinity.

THE DREAM OF NOEL

Evermore in rolling surge Creation
Had felt the undertow of Incarnation,
Had waited for the still depth of two eyes
The heart of God Creator might look through
And search to all its depths the heart of man.
Those eyes have baffled all the painter's skill,
Their lighted wonder, Earth's most potent
spell.

They hold an inner penetrating ray
To all the dim adventure of man's way:
They hold a power puissant over all,
King of earth's kings, the Babe Christ in the
stall.

And wonder-looks of each young child of
man

Like cherubs bright reflect the Light-Divine,
Infant glow of Face which shone on Mary.
And up the stairway of the Christ-Child's
heart

The children and the childlike climb to God.

Each Christmas Birth-day earth becomes a
stage

Where mystic wonder shines from age to age;
To mortal scenes high radiance is given,
We walk awhile as in the light of Heaven.

THE DREAM OF NOEL

SONG

*The Childhood of our God
The Dream of Noel brings;
Our God in heart a Child
The Dream of Noel sings.*

*His arm of power and might
Swings all the stars in space,
But He himself is kin
With all our human race.*

*The deepest thoughts of God
He speaks through infant eyes,
And to child-hearts He gives
More wisdom than the wise.*

*And so the Child of God
Is born in all our hearts,
To us He gives the Life
His radiant Love imparts.*

*Thus Love upgathers all,
And man with God shall dwell;
All Earth and Heaven praise
The Lord, the Dream of Noel.*

